Testimony of Lourdes Pérez-Medina
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UPROSE
Brooklyn Borough President - Industry City Rezoning Public Hearing
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4201 4th Avenue
Brooklyn, New York

Good evening everyone, I’m Lourdes Pérez-Medina, the Climate Justice Policy and Programs Coordinator of UPROSE. Brooklyn’s oldest Latino community-based organization and a national grassroots leader in the climate justice movement. The Industry City (IC) rezoning, as it stands, threatens to displace existing industrial and manufacturing businesses, and dearticulate NYC’s largest industrial real estate asset.

Industry City has promised to host a total of 15,000 jobs. Considering their proposal includes two luxury hotels and destination retail, we can assume that the majority of these will be service jobs. Service jobs don’t provide living-wages. Today, the unemployment rate in NYC is at 4 percent, its lowest since 2012 when it reached 9.6 percent. The city’s current and most pressing challenge is affordability, people can’t afford to live here. This means, what really matters is not the amount of jobs, but what kind of jobs; how much they pay; who gets to benefit from them; and, does the current Sunset Park workforce have the skills to get them?

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The GRID is a viable alternative that targets the creation of green living-wage jobs, job training opportunities and the transitioning of existing polluting infrastructures to address public health outcomes in Sunset Park. The Climate & Community Protection Act (CLCPA) and Climate Mobilization Act (CMA) are projected to create over 150,000 climate jobs. The majority of which are in the manufacturing, retrofit, renewable energy, and carpentry and construction sectors. Further, the CLCPA mandates that 35% of climate funding benefits go to frontline communities. IC’s proposal threatens to displace these valuable investments that can support living wage jobs, transition polluting infrastructures, spur local economic development, and ensure that the city and state can build infrastructure to meet climate goals. The GRID will leverage these legislative opportunities to build a Just Transition locally, not just at IC, but through the entire 14 million sft of manufacturing space in the working waterfront. That’s a lot of jobs.

We demand that Eric Adams do right by Brooklyn and help stop the enabling of developer greed. We urge the Borough President to support the GRID to build a climate adaptable and equitable future for Sunset Park and NY. IC must incorporate the amendments outlined in the GRID’s Subarea C to their proposal so we can begin to pilot a local GRID that will become a model for the nation.

For more information, please refer to UPROSE’s full-length written testimony and visit our website at www.uprose.org/the-grid.

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